

SERMON OF THE WEEK

Wisemen's Faith: Inner Conviction

By WILLIAM J. ROLEDER
Pastor, First Lutheran Church

January 6 is the festival of Epiphany. It is the "12th Day of Christmas." The word Epiphany comes from a Greek word meaning "showing" or "manifestation" . . . the manifestation or showing of Christ to the Gentiles. It commemorates the visit of the Wise Men to the infant Jesus.

What lesson can we learn from these wise men, these foreigners, non-Jews, Gentiles, who made a hazardous journey across many miles of strange countries to worship a child that was born to the Jews?

Well, I believe they become perfect examples of faith. They give us a concrete picture of what our text speaks of, namely: "To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see."

Why did these men from the East, who were part scientists, part magicians, part astrologers, leave their own country which was once called Persia, to follow this newly visible star? It was more than curiosity, and their motives were certainly not political or commercial. That eliminates a good many of the important motives that get us going on things.

They had another important motive that we Christians can well appreciate. They came because they were seeking God Himself. "They believed," said a Christian teacher, "That the star would lead them to God Himself—to God's human self—and they wanted to believe it, because they had an irresistible desire to see God face to face." (John R. Bodo, '67 "The Pulpit")

We ought to be encouraged by this old story. We, too, can have a first-hand experience of God. God sets a star in our spiritual sky—that will lead us to Him. We need to follow it.

What stars will we steer by? God gave the Wise Men a star. From the same country centuries before He called Abraham. He gave Abraham a deep inner conviction. He spoke unmistakably to him to make his journey of faith. God speaks, He points, He sets stars in the sky. He gives us a book that speaks of guidance. He shows the way. But man must still make the act of faith, and move out into the unknown trusting God. "To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for (to be certain we have read the guiding stars properly), to be certain of the things we cannot see."

What is faith? Jesus called it

an essential in all worthy living. When He found faith in an unsuspected person (the Roman centurion) He exclaimed in joyful surprise: "I have not found such great faith in Israel!"

Faith is the crux of human life: "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned."

Faith is not blind belief. It is not a flogging of the mind into an acceptance of a creed which is suspected to be false. Science, history, criticism—faith should welcome them all as allies and friends. We must be willing to scrutinize the foundations of faith.

William James imagines a man caught in such a position on a steep mountain side that he can save himself only by jumping over a hazardous abyss. If the man waits for scientific proof that he can leap that gulf, he will starve to death. The only proof is in the attempt. If he thinks only of his fears, he will become momentarily more timid and uncertain and invite failure. But if he has an assurance that the thing he hopes for, that is, a conviction of a safe landing not-yet-seen, he will create his own proof!

What stars are there in your sky that God asks you to risk yourself in following? What is there that God asks you to put your faith in? What task, what loyalty, what service, what a cause? De we have faith that in following our stars we will eventually come to find Christ Himself?

Abraham came to know God when he embarked on a journey with Him. Jacob saw the stairway reaching to heaven as he moved out on his journey of faith. By faith, Moses made the journey back to Egypt to lead God's people to freedom. By faith that God was indeed pointing to a revelation of himself the Wise Men journeyed hundreds of miles in the conviction the journey would bring them face to face with God.

The driver of the first covered wagon who set out for this western state, this promised land, needed faith. He saw something with the eyes of faith. He could not know. He could only believe. But wasn't the first driver called a fool? All the substantial and sensible people said he was a fool. But how was America made? By faith. By an inner strength or courage which gave them the assurance of the things hoped for.

So what can we say to you? Simply, "Have faith." Find the task God wants you to do. Find your star . . . but more than

that, act upon it with faith. That means risk something for God.

Phillips Brooks' oft-quoted definition of faith has been helpful to many. He said, "Faith, F-a-i-t-h means, Forsaking All I Take Him." Receive Christ. His Presence into your life, make a daring commitment to Him that you will follow wherever he will guide and direct. And when the journey is over for this year, we will look back . . . and like Abraham, Moses, Enoch, Jacob and the Wise Men, we will be able to say, it was indeed a journey of faith but God was with us all the way. So, fear not, have faith. Put your faith to a test. Cast yourself in faith upon God, and follow His star.

Amen.



LAUREL SCHERER

Students Publish Paper

The seventh and eighth grades of the Christian Day School at Ascension Lutheran Church, 10 S. Prairie Ave., are publishing a monthly paper, "School Talk." The students do all the work themselves, even the running of the church ditto machine.

This paper has proven useful in bridging the communications gap between students and their elders. The faculty advisor to the paper is Mrs. Lloyd C. Warneke.

A highlight of each issue is the editorial written by Laurel Scherer, one of the eighth grade students. Her writing reflects Christian education. "Let's show that we have religious training and try to set an example for others", maturity ("God gave you your talent, so use it wisely and to His glory"), and a thoroughness that is typical of her school work.

Miss Scherer is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Doug Scherer, Manhattan Beach.

Should Christianity heal today?

Christ Jesus taught and proved the power of Truth to heal.

The Bible records that he "healed all manner of disease among the people," and he taught all those who followed him to "go and do likewise."

And many do. Christian Science teaches the present power of God to heal, and this healing is going on today throughout the world.

In our Reading Room you will enjoy reading the inspiring weekly Bible Lessons which reveal the spiritually scientific basis for Jesus' marvelous healing works.

You are welcome to come in and read in our quiet room today.

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George Griese Is Named Adventist Church Elder

George Griese, named by the Torrance Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1610 Acacia Ave., as head elder for the church for 1969, heads a list of 48 local persons elected to serve as church officers for the new year.

Griese, a layman, will assist Pastor David H. Pillor in guiding the spiritual welfare of the local congregation in 1969. Also named as elders of the local Adventist church for 1969 are: Alfred Gordon, Robert Piper, Floyd Stark, and Forrest Thomas.

Other officers include 12 deacons and deaconesses. Elected as deacons are: Mahlon Gilbert, Bobbie Robertson, Steve Thorson, John Dillon, Harry Stevick, and Everett Clark.



MYRON FLOREN

'Twelfth Night' Concert Slated

Accordianist Myron Floren and 13-year-old Torrance pianist Larry Posner will be featured artists at a Twelfth Night concert Monday, 8 p.m., at the Mira Costa High School Auditorium, Manhattan Beach. Admission is free.

The South Bay-Torrance Symphony, under the baton of Miss Elyse Aehle, will play the music of Haydn, Wagner, and Prokofiev.

Young Larry Posner, a student at Casimir School, was named winner of the Symphony's 7th grade scholarship last May. The scholarships are given in honor of Viola Niland.

Dorcas Leader, Catherine Cochran; assistant, Crecia Foster; missionary secretary, Emma Stevick; assistant, Lillian Lamb; Librarian, Louise Carter; floral secretary, Amie Bunge;

Medical and temperance secretary, Bernie Moshos; special music committee, Libby Pillor, Pat Piper, and David Pillor; missionary volunteers, Elsie Cook and Mrs. Weatherford; Sabbath School superintendent, Alfred Gordon; Sabbath School secretary, Virginia Axelson; Pathfinders, Bobbie Robertson and John Dillon;

Junior Deacons, David Pillor, James Moore, Jim Thomas, and Dean Robertson; ushers, Lavern Zeman and Ron Perrin; lay activities, Floyd Stark and George Griese;

Public relations and religious liberty secretary, Louise Carter; welcoming committee, Dorothy Dillon, Betty Griese, Virginia Axelson, and Elise Cook; social committee, Betty Griese, Penny Thomas, Bernice Moshos, Libby

Pillor, Terry Moore, and Zella Zeman;

Sabbath School pianist, Luanne Tagami and Pat Piper; song leader, Mahlon Gilbert; cradle roll leader, Mrs. Mary Clark;

Kindergarten leader, Thelma Robertson; assistant, Laura Thomas; Junior Earliteen division, Steve Thorson and Bobbie Robertson; primary division, Mrs. Delores Perrin and Everett Clark.

New officers for the coming year were chosen by the church's nominating committee, which presented the names to church members for their approval. All officers take their new posts on Saturday, Jan. 4.

Officers Assume Duties

Newly elected officers of the Torrance Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1610 Acacia Ave., will participate in their new duties for the first time at services Saturday beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The church Sabbath school director, Mahlon Gilbert, will be in charge of the Sabbath school services at 9:30 a.m.

These services will feature a mission report on Trans-Africa Division and the raising of funds for Kendu Hospital, on the shores of Lake Victoria in Western Kenya, East Africa, to be given by Mrs. L. Carter.

A Bible lesson study also will be given by the following newly appointed teachers directing individual classes: Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. D. Perrin, Mrs. D. Moshos, Mrs. Cochran, Mr. S. Thorson, George Griese, Mr. F. Thomas, Mr. M. Gilbert and Pastor David Pillor.

At 11 a.m. worship services lay members, elders and deacons, appointed to serve the church in 1969, will be participating for the first time.

Southern California Conference Lay Activities Lader, Elder Branson Chrispens, will give the sermon entitled, "Here and Now," at the 11 a.m. worship service. Lay members participating in the worship service will be Floyd Stark and George Griese.

Hundreds Collected In Drive

Officials of the 65th World Missions Appeal public fund campaign reported this week that \$1,850 has been contributed by persons throughout Torrance to the worldwide uplift drive.

Alfred Gordon, ingathering leader, local director of the campaign, noted that 30 volunteers from the Torrance Seventh-day Adventist Church, World Missions Appeal sponsoring organization, are participating in the uplift program.

Gordon said funds given to the World Missions Appeal are divided between local needs, such as welfare and disaster relief units, and world needs, such as clinics, dispensaries, leper colonies, mission schools — often the only facilities available to large populations.

Wayfarers Communion Service Set

On Sunday morning at the regular 11 a.m. worship service, in the Wayfarers' Chapel, Portuguese Bend, worshippers will be asked to join in a service of Communion and Re-Dedication for the New Year led by the Rev. Robert Loring Young.

The Ritual of Re-Dedication, symbolized by the written commitment of character reformation, will be observed, as wayfarers place their individual resolutions upon a burning brazier in the chancel and watch the smoke rise as a phoenix into the air.

The public is invited to take part in this special service.

Daniel In Lion's Den Will Theme Sermon

In the Bible Lesson-Sermon titled "God" to be read in all Christian Science churches this Sunday are found familiar passages from the account of Daniel.

"Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee. . . ."

"So Daniel was taken up out

of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."

Related passages from the denominational textbook will include the following: "Citizens of the world, accept the 'glorious liberty of the children of God,' and be free! This is your divine right."

Services at First Church of Christ, Scientist, 218th and Manuel Avenues, are held at 11 a.m. All are welcome.

Bible Classes Slated

On Jan. 6 and 7, the Layman's Bible Institute of Southern California will open for its Spring semester. This new school welcomes students from all churches. A new curriculum of more than 20 Bible and Christian Life courses is being offered.

Subjects such as Family Counseling, the Book of Revelation, and A Thousand and One Ideas for Christian Workers are being offered.

The school meets at the First Brethren Church of Long Beach, 3601 Linden Ave.

Classes are held each Monday and Tuesday evening from 7 to 9 p.m., and the student may take as many as four courses. Complete information is available by writing to Bible Institute of Southern California, Box 39, Temple City, Calif., 91780.



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LARRY POSNER

CHURCH CALENDAR

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<p>NARBONNE AVENUE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH 24730 Narbonne Ave., Lomita Phone DA 4-6029</p> <p>Worship Service 7 P.M. Church 10:30 A.M. Sunday School 9:45 A.M. Training Union 6 P.M.</p>	<p>FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF TORRANCE (Disciples of Christ) 2936 El Dorado—FA 8-2829 Rev. H. Milton Sipeel, Minister Res. Phone FA 8-4582</p> <p>Rev. Joseph Yong Minister of Education Two Seasons of Church School and Morning Devotion 9:30 and 11:00 A.M. Nursery provided at both sessions. CHI RHO Fellowship 5:30 P.M. Christian Youth Fellowship— 7:00 P.M.</p>
<p>FIRST METHODIST CHURCH Torrance Carson and El Prado Phone FA 8-3242</p> <p>Rev. Arthur Nagel, Pastor Res. Phone FA 8-6231</p> <p>SUNDAYS: Two Worship Services 9:30 and 11 A.M. Two Complete Church Schools 9:30 and 11 A.M. All ages—nursery thru adults Fellowship Meeting 6:30 P.M.</p>	<p>ST. LAWRENCE CATHOLIC CHURCH 1900 Prospect Ave. Redondo Beach</p> <p>Monsignor Daniel P. Collins Mass 7, 8, 9, 10, 11:15, 12:18 Phone 378-9329</p>
<p>SOUTH BAY BAPTIST CHURCH 4543 Sharynne Lane Torrance, Calif. Frontier 8-3433</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30 A.M. Church Services at 10:30 A.M. Junior and Primary Church 10:30 A.M.</p> <p>Baptist Training Union 6:00 P.M. Evening Worship 7:00 P.M. Wednesday Prayer Service 7:00 P.M. Nursery and toddler care—All Services. Bus transportation service.</p>	<p>CENTRAL EVANGELICAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Marcella & Arlington Rev. Walter M. Stanton FA 8-3010</p> <p>9:30—Sunday School 11:00—Morning Worship 6:30—Youth Fellowship Midweek Worship Service 7:30 Wednesday Evening</p>
<p>YOUR CHURCH LISTING IN THIS CALENDAR COSTS JUST \$3.50 PER WEEK</p> <p>A permanent listing advertising your times of services and church affairs.</p> <p>CALL 325-6060</p>	<p>TORRANCE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE 700 Maple Ave. R. Wallis Kornezay, Pastor Ph. 325-9080</p> <p>9:45 Sunday School 10:50 Morning Worship 7:00 P.M. Evening Service</p>
<p>ST. CATHERINE LABOURE CHURCH 2846 Redondo Beach Blvd. Torrance Phone Davis 3-8900</p> <p>Sunday Masses, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 Weekday Masses: 6:30 A.M. and 8:15 A.M. Confessions Saturday 4:00 to 5:30, 7:30 to 9:00</p>	<p>PACIFIC VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH Member Baptist General Conference Temporarily located in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Sonoma St. at Acacia Ave., Torrance, Calif. Tel. 326-4115</p> <p>Sunday School Worship 9:15 A.M. Sunday Morning Worship 10:30-11:50 A.M. Sunday Eve Service 7:00 P.M. Thursday Prayer Fellowship 7:30 P.M. —Nursery Available at All Services—</p>
<p>ST. ANDREWS EPISCOPAL CHURCH 1413 Engracia—FA 5-5781 Rev. Hugh R. Percy R.A. B.D. Rector</p> <p>7:30 A.M. Holy Communion 9:15 A.M. Family Worship Service followed by Church School and Coffee Hour 11:00 A.M. Morning Worship (Choral Eucharist on 1st and 3rd Sundays) (Child care and Nursery provided at 9:15 and 11 A.M. services) Weekdays Holy Communion at 11 A.M. Thursdays and 6:30 A.M. on All Saint's Days.</p>	<p>FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GARDENA 1957 W. Redondo Beach Blvd. Phone DA 4-1044</p> <p>Rev. John Boller, Minister 1492 W. 135th St., Gardena DA 3-2123</p> <p>Worship Service 11:00 A.M. (Nursery Care Provided) Sunday Church School Classes, All Ages 9:30 A.M. Senior Hi Fellowship and Junior High Fellowship Sundays at 7:00 P.M. Presbyterian Pre-school, Week Day Mornings</p>
<p>FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH 1725 Flower Street Phone 329-4181</p> <p>William J. Roleder, Pastor Phone FA 8-3243</p> <p>Steven A. Myers, Assoc. Pastor</p> <p>Worship Services 8:00 A.M., 9:15 A.M., 10:45 A.M. Sunday School 9:00 A.M., 9:15 A.M., 10:45 A.M. Nursery services for 9:15 A.M. and 10:45 A.M. Holy Communion—First Sunday Luther League—2nd and 4th Sundays Christian Elementary School— Kindergarten thru 8th Grade</p>	<p>NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH 1447 Engracia Ave., Torrance Phone: FA 8-2776</p> <p>Rev. John P. Cremins, Pastor</p> <p>MASS SCHEDULE Sundays: 7, 8, 9, 10:15, 11:15, 12:15 and 5 P.M. St. Joseph's at 9:30 A.M. SATURDAY CONFESSIONS 10:30 to 11:30 A.M.; 3:30 to 5:30, 7:30 to 9 P.M. St. Joseph's at 7:15 P.M. BAPTISMS Every Sunday at 1:45 P.M.</p>
<p>TORRANCE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH Serving Christ and the Needs of Men 2118 Carson Street Phone 328-5039</p> <p>Rev. Lloyd H. Newlin</p> <p>SUNDAY Worship Services 8:15 and 11:00 a.m. Bible Study Classes 9:30 a.m. Youth Activities 5:45 p.m. Evening Gospel Hour 7 p.m.</p> <p>WEDNESDAY Youth & Adult Study, Prayer & Fellowship 7:15 p.m. Nursery Facilities</p>	<p>IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Missouri Synod 706 Knob Hill Redondo Beach 375-9335</p> <p>Rev. E.M. Schoppa, Pastor</p> <p>Worship Service, 8 and 11 A.M. Nursery Care Provided Sunday School and Bible Classes 9:30 A.M. (3 Years and Up) Friday School of Religion 4 to 6 P.M. Dial Inspiration—378-5293 (24 Hours)</p>
<p>YOUR CHURCH LISTING IN THIS CALENDAR COSTS JUST \$3.50 PER WEEK</p> <p>A permanent listing advertising your times of services and church affairs.</p> <p>CALL 325-6060</p>	<p>CALVARY BAPTIST TABERNACLE A Church of the Old Gospel L. George Hunt, Pastor 18701 Denker Avenue, Gardena 327-2040</p> <p>Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Youth Meetings 6:00 p.m. Evening Service 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>WEDNESDAY PRAYER MEETING 7:15 p.m.</p> <p>Nursery Available All Services</p>
<p>FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST 218th St. and Manuel Ave. Torrance, Calif. Church Services—11 A.M. Wednesday Eve Meetings 8 P.M.</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. Children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by parent or guardian for enrollment. Reading Room—1406 Cravens Open 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily except Sunday and Holidays. Also 7 to 9 Monday and Friday evenings. All are welcome to attend our services and use our Reading Room.</p>	<p>YOUR CHURCH LISTING IN THIS CALENDAR COSTS JUST \$3.50 PER WEEK</p> <p>A permanent listing advertising your times of services and church affairs.</p> <p>CALL 325-6060</p>